

**DRAFT**



*a CHARACTER COUNTS! City*

**CITY OF GAITHERSBURG  
MINUTES OF THE MARCH 20, 2006  
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION MEETING**

A meeting of the Historic District Commission was called to order at 8:40 p.m., Chair Katz presiding. Commissioners present: Alster, Edens, Marraffa, Schlichting and Sesma. Planning Commissioners present for the joint public hearing: Bauer, Hopkins, Kaufman, Levy, Winborne. Staff present: City Manager Humpton, Planner Patula, Rhonda Bernstein (Member of the Historic Preservation Advisory Committee [HPAC]), City Attorney Borten and Administrative Assistant Stokes.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Motion was made by Commissioner Edens, seconded by Commissioner Marraffa, that the minutes of a Historic District Commission meeting held December 19, 2005, be approved.

Vote: 6-0

Motion was made by Commissioner Schlichting, seconded by Commissioner Marraffa, that the minutes of a Historic District Commission meeting held February 21, 2006, be approved.

Vote: 5-0-1 (Abstained: Edens)

**JOINT PUBLIC HEARING**

**HD-31, Designation of the Housely/Gaither House at 106 North Summit Avenue**

Planner Patula introduced the above joint public hearing advertised in the *Gaithersburg Gazette* on March 1 and 8, 2006, and the property was posted. At the present time there are 21 exhibits in the record file.

Rhonda Bernstein, HPAC member, presented an architectural description of the vernacular craftsman-styled one and a half story residence and reviewed the elevations of the house. She incorporated the cultural and social importance of the site for the Commissions. Research dates the house at about 1929. Member Bernstein presented information which includes the title and ownership records, census records, and style evaluation. She showed aerial views of the location of the site which fronts on North Summit Avenue, stating that at the present time, the site consists of a single family dwelling and its side yard. Member Bernstein gave legal description of the site, stating that Parcel P773 is located in the Deer Park Subdivision and currently owned by Maryland Community Development Trust, LLC, represented by Claudio Joseph, General Manager. History was given about the families who were associated and lived in the house. The Gaither descendants purchased the home in 1957, cousin of Benjamin Gaither, after whom the City is named. She further stated that the house was again purchased in 1986 after the death of Agnes Gaither and recently purchased in 2005 by the Maryland Community Development Trust, LLC.

Pat Patula continued the presentation with a summary of the criteria of historic significance of the Housely/Gaither House. She stated HPAC visited the site on January 3, 2006, reviewed and evaluated the research and made recommendations to the Historic District Commission on the criteria for historic significance. The HPAC recommended that the house be designated historic on the local level using the following criteria from the City's Preservation of Historic Resources Ordinance: Historical and Cultural Significance, Section 24-226(b)(1)a, has character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the city and county; Historical and Cultural Significance Sec 24-226(b)(1)c, is identified with a person or a group of persons who influenced society; Architecture and Design Significance, Section 24-226(b)(2)a, embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction; and under Architecture and Design Significance, Section 24-226(b)(2)f, embodies design, setting, materials, workmanship and ambience to the city's sense of time, place and historic development.

Speakers from the public:

1. *Winfrey Irvin, 405 South Frederick Avenue*, questioned using the age of said home as criteria stating that two nearby homes built in the 1900, were approved for demolition. Not in support of historic designation for 106 North Summit Avenue.
2. *John Roddy, 105 South Summit Avenue, Olde Towne Advisory Committee Member*, speaking on behalf of the Committee, referred to a letter submitted dated March 13, 2006. He stated that the Committee is not in favor of the historic designation for various reasons. He stated that historic designation would not be the best use for the property. He applauded the research done for the application.
3. *Claudio Joseph, General Manager, Maryland Community Planning Development Trust*, questioned how long a family influence in society is considered important. Stated the home was purchased with the impression that it would not be designated historic.

There were no other speakers. Both Commissions thanked Planner Patula and HPAC Member Bernstein for the presentation and commended those involved in the research.

Motion was made by Planning Commissioner Levy, seconded by Commissioner Winborne, that the Planning Commission record on HD-31 remains open until March 28, 2006, and make a recommendation to the Historic District Commission on April 5, 2006.

Vote: 5-0

Motion was made by Historic District Commissioner Alster, seconded by Commissioner Marraffa, that the Historic District Commission record on HD-31 remains open until April 13, 2006, 5 p.m., vote anticipated on April 18, 2006.

Vote: 5-0-1 (Abstained: Edens)

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Historic District Commission, the meeting was duly adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted,*

*Doris R. Stokes*

Administrative Assistant